

**ISSUE:** Rule 24 - Are barges sufficiently lighted while underway?

**INVITATION TO NAVSAC:** Review and discuss information and materials provided. Discuss whether there is a problem with the lighting on barges, what the problem is, and solutions to resolve the problem. Prepare recommendations for discussion and resolution of question in plenary session with the full Council.

**BACKGROUND:**

Questions regarding the lighting of barges have been on almost every NAVSAC agenda since the late 1980's. At the November 1994 meeting, the National Boating Safety Advisory Council (NBSAC) asked NAVSAC to look at the sufficiency of barge lighting in conjunction with interaction between recreational and commercial vessels. It was the consensus of the Council that the issue of adequacy of barge lighting was more complex than just adding more lights and one that should be looked at carefully and thoroughly. Interaction with mariners for their input and proposed solutions was felt to be essential. To facilitate this interaction, the Council unanimously passed Resolution [94-05] requesting the Coast Guard to go out for public comment on whether towing vessels and vessels being towed are sufficiently lighted while underway.

At its April 1995 meeting, NAVSAC reviewed and approved a draft Federal Register notice seeking public comment on the issue. The notice was published in the Federal Register on May 9, 1995 (60 FR 24598).

The Barge Lighting Committee summarized the seventy responses to the Federal Register notice for the Council at the November 1995 meeting. Based on comments and recommendations received from the public, the Committee concluded that more information was needed to clarify the core of the barge lighting issue. After extensive discussion, the Council passed 13 resolutions requesting specific actions. The status of these actions follow:

**[95-09] NAVSAC requests that the Coast Guard explore uniform recreational boater education and advise NAVSAC of corrective action, including current education programs.**

- Status: *Complete. Information was previously passed that addresses the issues raised in Resolutions [95-09] and [95-10]. These concerns were also addressed at the April 1996 joint meeting with NBSAC.*

**[95-10] NAVSAC requests that the Coast Guard explore uniform licensing program for recreational boaters.**

- Status: *Complete. Information was previously passed that addresses the issues raised in Resolutions [95-09] and [95-10]. These concerns were also addressed at the April 1996 joint meeting with NBSAC.*

**[95-11] NAVSAC requests that NBSAC and TSAC provide NAVSAC input on the BUI/BWI issue.**

- Status: *Complete. Both Councils agree that it is a problem with the recreational boater but do not know to what extent.*

**[95-12] NAVSAC requests that the Coast Guard provide an evaluation of data from incident reporting, identifying root causes of collisions between recreational boaters and towing vessels.**

- Status: *Complete. Listing of towboat collision cases where lighting problems other than lighting scheme identification noted.*

**[95-13] NAVSAC requests that the Coast Guard clarify the applicability of the navigation lighting requirements of 46 CFR to uninspected vessels.**

- Status: *Awaiting legal opinion.*

**[95-14] NAVSAC requests that the Coast Guard advise them on the feasibility of portable lanterns to meet vertical sector requirements.**

- Status: *It may be possible, with a different lens, as chromaticity of the lens is the real issue. Not enough light passes through the lens, with current battery pack, to meet both intensity and vertical sector requirements.*

[95-15] NAVSAC requests that the Coast Guard check for navigation light compliance during annual and other inspections.

- Status: This will be easier with the requirement that each navigation light has to meet the technical details of the applicable navigation rule and be certified by an independent laboratory to specific UL requirements. See Section 111.75-17 of the referenced Interim Final Rule on electrical engineering requirements for merchant vessels (61 FR 28282).

[95-16] NAVSAC requests that the Coast Guard advise NAVSAC as to whether there should be a formal approval process for navigation lights in 33 CFR.

- Status: Same response as [95-15] above.

[95-17] NAVSAC requests that the Coast Guard and TSAC advise NAVSAC as to the feasibility and practicality of retro-reflective material for barge markings.

- Status: *TSAC report is part of this issue paper.*

[95-18] NAVSAC requests that the Coast Guard propose that IMO change Rule 24 so that vessels towing astern exhibit three white masthead lights, regardless of the length of the tow.

- Status: *No opportunity to bring this up informally at July 1996 IMO session of the Safety of Navigation Subcommittee as previously indicated. Plan to correspond with Chairman of IMO subcommittee working group which deals with Navigation Rules.*

[95-19] NAVSAC requests that Inland Rule 24(i) be amended so that vessels towing exhibit the required masthead lights below Baton Rouge.

- Status: No action.

[95-20] NAVSAC requests that the Coast Guard investigate the feasibility of recommending to IMO that the special flashing light be required on vessels being towed astern.

- Status: *No opportunity to bring this up informally at July 1996 IMO session of the Safety of Navigation Subcommittee as previously indicated. Plan to correspond with Chairman of IMO subcommittee working group which deals with Navigation Rules.*

**[95-21] NAVSAC requests that the Coast Guard investigate the feasibility of requiring a special flashing light on inland vessels towed astern and ahead.**

- Status: *Plan to correspond with Chairman of IMO subcommittee working group which deals with Navigation Rules to get the international perspective.*

#### **REFERENCES:**

1. NAVSAC Summary Record (pages 4-7)- November 1994 meeting, Report of the Rules of the Road Committee.
2. NAVSAC Summary Record (pages 7-9) - April 1996 meeting, Report of the Rules of the Road Committee B.
3. NAVSAC Summary Record (pages 3-6) - November 1995 meeting, Report of the Barge Lighting Committee.
4. Request for Comments (60 FR 24598, dtd May 9, 1995).
5. Listing of Comments.
6. Towing Safety Advisory Committee Comments
7. National Boating Safety Advisory Council Comments.
8. Houston-Galveston Safety Advisory Committee Comments.
9. Listing of Towboat Collision Cases with Lighting Problems other than Lighting Scheme Identification.
10. Federal Register excerpts on Navigation Lighting requirements.